

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY S/S: PTARNOFF:GB

APPROVED BY MR.TARNOFF

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TO USDEL SECRETARY NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 079335 TOSEC 030006

EXDIS/KOOLAIID FOR WISNER (S/S) ONLY FROM PETER TARNOFF

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: IRANIAN GOVERNMENT REQUEST FOR TEAR GAS GRENADES

1. IN A SEPARATE TELEGRAM YOU WILL BE RECEIVING A RECOMMEN-
DATION FOR MR. VANCE ON THE ABOVE SUBJECT. IN ADDITION TO
THE FACTORS LISTED, PLEASE BRING THE FOLLOWING TO MR.
VANCE'S ATTENTION:

-- THE RIOTS FOR WHICH THE TEAR GAS IS INTENDED ARE SCHEDUL-
ED TO TAKE PLACE ON MARCH 31. IN ORDER TO GET THE TEAR GAS
TO IRAN IN TIME, EITHER A RUSH AIR FREIGHT SHIPMENT WOULD
HAVE TO BE MADE OR THE IRANIAN AIR FORCE WOULD HAVE TO SEND
A PLANE TO PICK UP THE GRENADES. IN EITHER CASE, IT WOULD
LOOK AS IF THE U.S. WAS PROVIDING SPECIFIC HELP IN A
SITUATION THAT COULD BECOME VIOLENT AND INVOLVE THE FURTHER
LOSS OF LIFE.

-- THE IRANIAN REQUEST HAS BEEN STAGNATING IN THE BUREAU-
CRACY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. IT HAS NOW COME TO THE SEVENTH
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FLOOR THREE DAYS BEFORE A DEADLINE FOR DELIVERY. THIS
HANDLING POINTS UP THE SLOWNESS OF THE PROCESSING OF
POLITICALLY AND TIME SENSITIVE CASES. AS MR. VANCE KNOWS,
CHRIS AND I ARE WORKING ON WAYS FOR HIM TO ORDER STREAM-
LINING OUR HANDLING OF SUCH CASES.

2. IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS, I RECOMMEND

THAT THE IRANIANS BE TOLD THAT IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR US TO MAKE AN IMMEDIATE DECISION ON THE CASE GIVEN THE ABSENCE OF MR. VANCE AND MR. CHRISTOPHER FROM WASHINGTON. WE COULD ALSO EXPRESS REGRET AT THE SLOWNESS OF OUR CONSIDERATION OF THE CASE.

3. IN ADDITION, I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT THE INTERESTED BUREAUS BE INSTRUCTED BY MR. VANCE TO PREPARE A STRICTLY IN-HOUSE ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT OF OUR GOING TO THE IRANIANS QUIETLY TO STATE THE FOLLOWING:

-- TEAR GAS EXPORTS ARE BOUND TO BE EXPLOITED BY PERSONS IN THE U.S. OPPOSED TO A CLOSE POLITICAL AND ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRAN AND THE U.S.

-- IN LIGHT OF THIS POLITICAL REALITY -- WHICH MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO APPROVE SUCH SALES AND PAINFUL FOR US TO HAVE TO REFUSE AUTHORIZATION - IT MIGHT BE TO OUR MUTUAL ADVANTAGE TO HAVE IRAN LOOK TO NON-U.S. SUPPLIERS OF TEAR GAS GRENADES. (FYI: IRAN HAS ALREADY PROCURED TEAR GAS SUPPLIES FROM WESTERN EUROPEAN SOURCES)

4. SUCH A STUDY WOULD BE VERY CLOSELY HELD AND BE AVAILABLE FOR THE SECRETARY'S CONSIDERATION ON HIS RETURN. I TRUST THAT MR. VANCE WILL ALLOW US TO EXPLORE CONFIDENTIAL

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SUCH AN APPROACH SINCE IT MAY PROVIDE THE BEST WAY TO DISCOURAGE FURTHER REQUESTS OF THIS KIND -- FROM IRAN AND ELSEWHERE -- THAT CAN ONLY STRAIN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.
COOPER

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